Reproduction Cartridge

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET

Introduction

Thank you for selecting the Nintendo Entertainment System Nintendo World Championships 1990 Reproduction Cartridge.

Please read this instruction booklet to ensure maximum enjoyment of your new game. Be sure to save this booklet for future reference.

OBJECT OF THE GAME/GAME DESCRIPTION

In 1990 Nintendo held one of the greatest gaming events in history: The Nintendo World Championships! This event traveled to large arenas in thirty cities in the U.S. Thousands of gamers around the country got a chance to compete for the crown as the Nintendo World Champion of their age group.

To compete, gamers had to grab fifty coins in Super Mario Bros., complete the first track in Rad Racer, and finally, reach the highest score they could in Tetris. At the event, all three games were combined into a special cartridge made specifically for the NWC. Ninety of these cartridges were given to the finalists of the event, and twenty-six gold-cased cartridges were given to winners of a Nintendo Power magazine competition. Outside of the NWC staff and these winners, few people in the public had ever seen these cartridges until the age of the Internet when some pictures and auctions began to pop up. Having only 116 known copies of the cartridge in public hands, the cartridge became very valuable among collectors, fetching thousands of dollars each, with the rarer gold cartridges bringing in multiple times the value of the standard gray cartridges. A few other cartridges unrelated to these winners have been found, but the cartridge remains extremely rare and valuable. Gamers around the world have longed for a chance to play this coveted cartridge, but due to the cost and rarity, it has been impossible. Plus, a reproduction of the cartridge was also considered impossible due to the complex circuitry of the original. Well, not any more! Finally, you can experience the thrill of the competition in your own home with the Nintendo World Championships 1990 Reproduction Cartridge!

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Controls

To start the game, press the Start button on Controller 2, not Controller 1. In the original competition this was a safeguard in place to make sure all competitors started and ended at the same time (it is said there was a mechanism in place that somehow did the equivalent of hitting all competitors' Controller 2 Start buttons at once).

After pressing Start on Controller 2, the game is played via Controller 1.

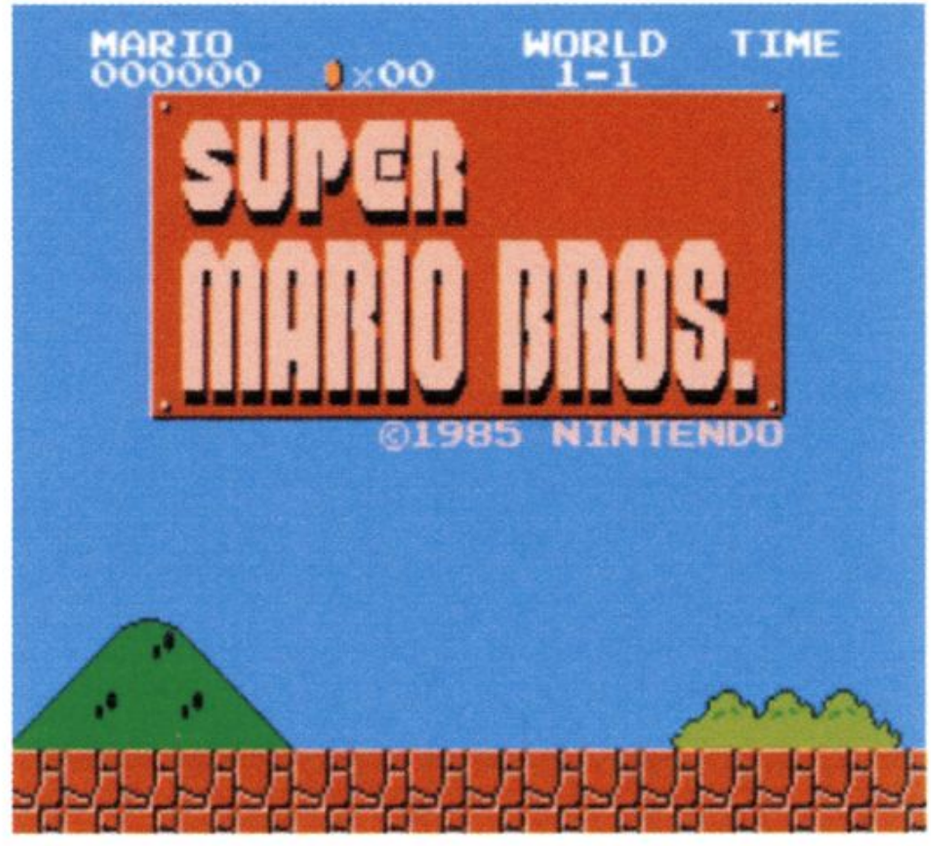
Note that none of the three games can be paused via the Start button as the original standalone versions can. Once started, you must play the game through to its end! Neither the Start nor Select buttons on Controller 1 are used for any of the three games. When the game is finished, you must completely turn off your NES console before playing again.

Timing

The original competition was played for 6 minutes 21 seconds. Your NWC cart has a set of DIP switches to configure the time. Look up how long you would like to play, then move the 4 switches left or right according to the chart:

5:04	5:24	5:42	6:00	**6:21**	6:38	6:57	7:16	7:34	7:53	8:12	8:31	8:49	9:08	9:25	9:46
L	R	L	R	**L**	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R
L	L	R	R	**L**	L	R	R	L	L	R	R	L	L	R	R
L	L	L	L	**R**	R	R	R	L	L	L	L	R	R	R	R
L	L	L	L	**L**	L	L	L	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R

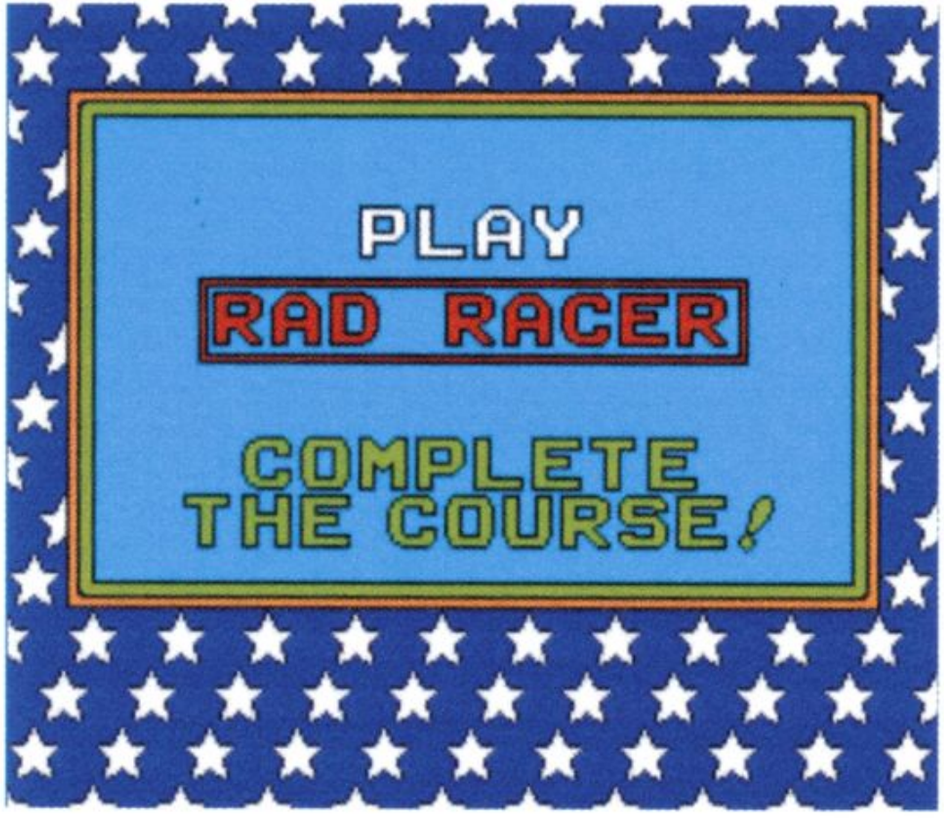
Super Mario Bros.

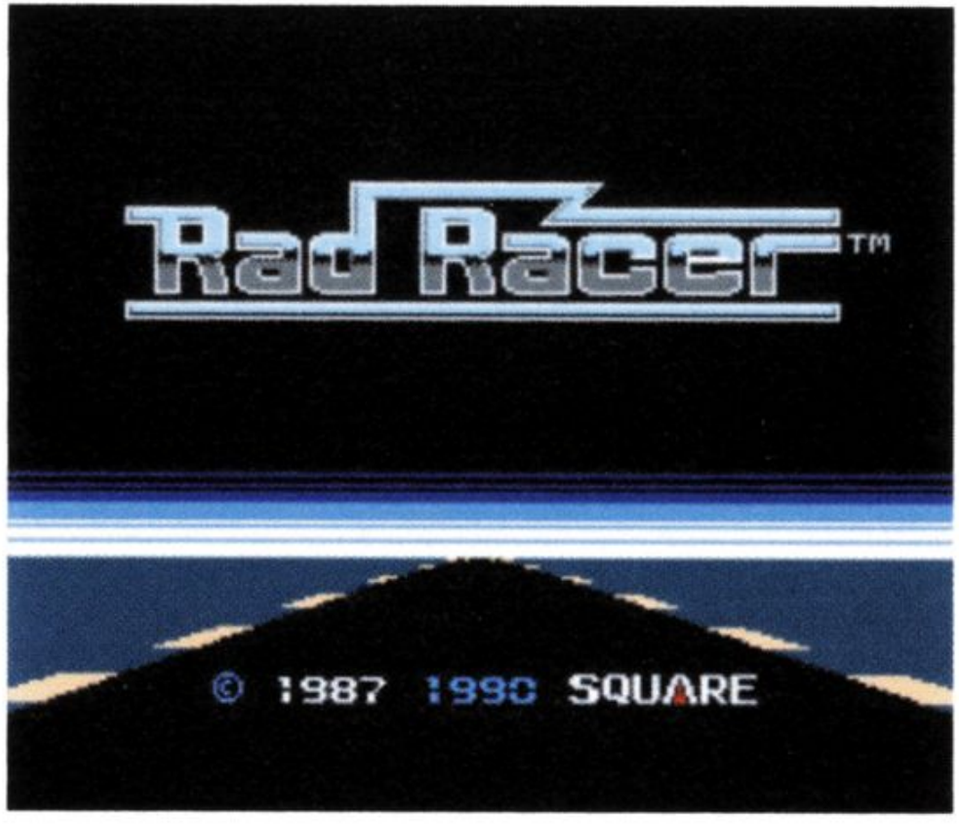


The controls for Mario match the standalone cartridge. Mario will have 99 lives, unlike the standalone version.

A button..... Mario jumps, swims.
B button..... Mario runs (when used with Left or Right), throws fireballs.
Left and Right..... Moves Mario left and right.
Down..... Mario crouches when Super Mario, climbs down vines.
Up..... Mario climbs up vines

Rad Racer

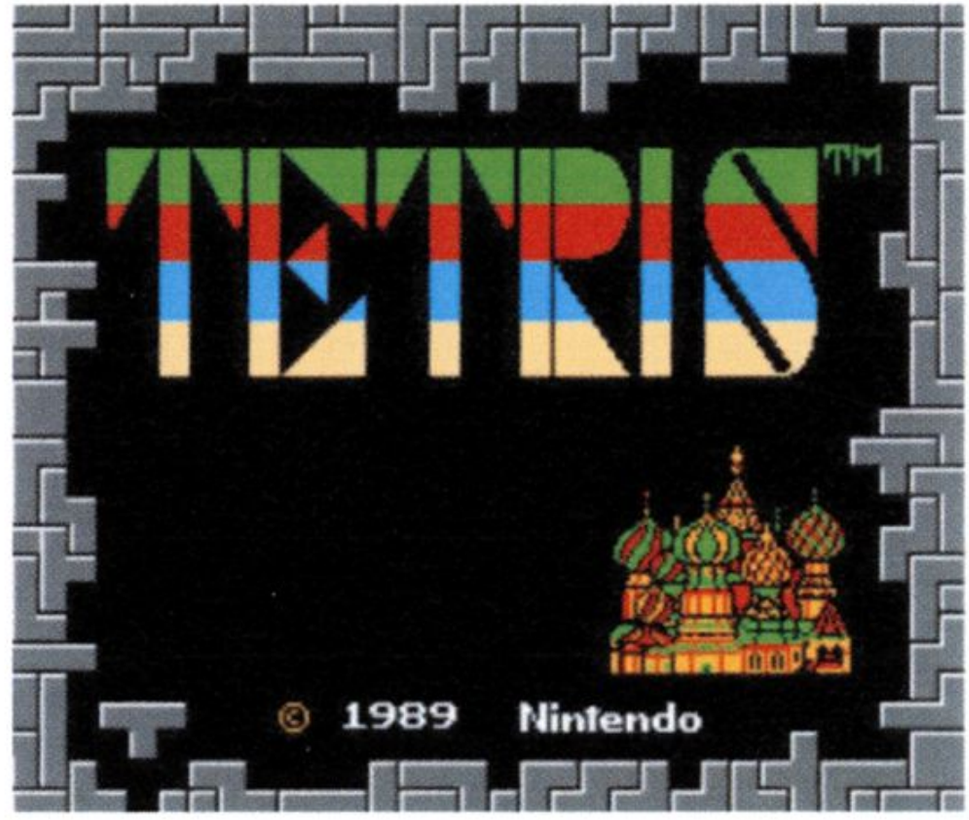




The controls for Rad Racer are almost the same as the standalone version. Your car cannot overheat as in the standalone version, allowing you to maintain maximum speed for longer periods. Also, the timer stays at 99. Note that you are not able to choose between the 328 Twin Turbo or the F1 Machine as in the original. You must drive the 328 Twin Turbo.

A button..... Accelerate.
B button..... Brake.
Left and Right.....Steers left and right..
Up.....Turbo acceleration for higher speeds.
Down.....Does not change music as in the original version. In the NWC, this button does nothing.

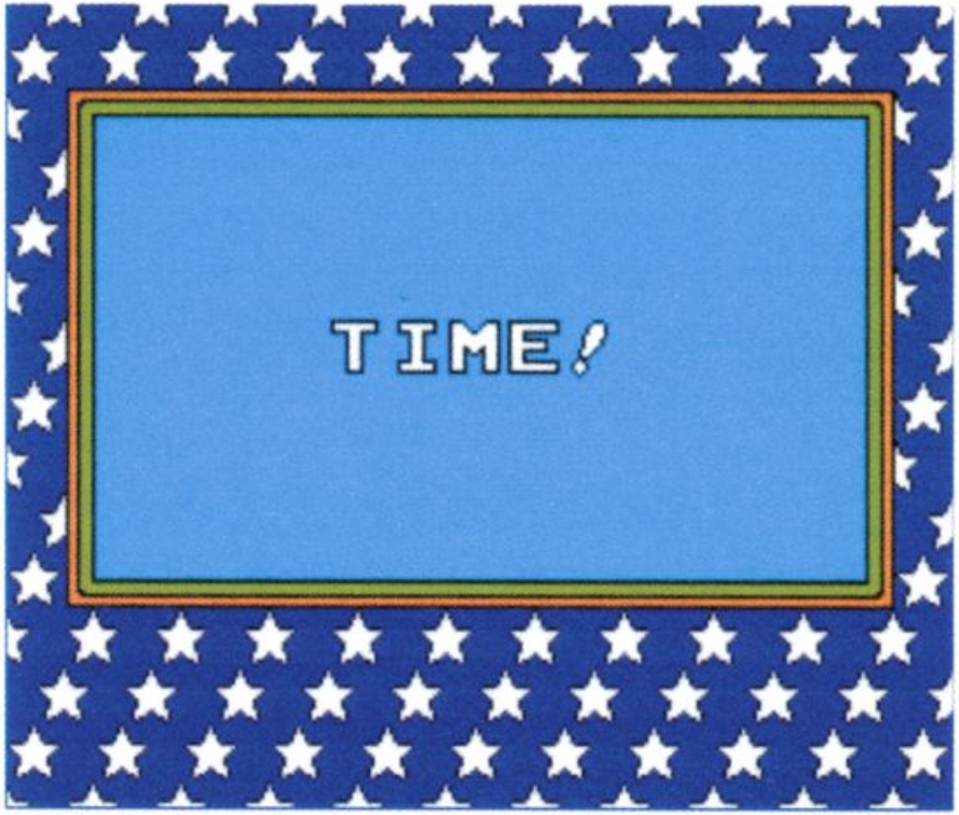
Tetris



The controls for Tetris match the standalone cartridge, though there are fewer possible block patterns (see page 11 for how to determine the block pattern you will receive). You can play only the Type A game, except you score points only for making lines, not for every block that touches down, as in the standalone version. You cannot choose height or speed as in the original version (you start at Level 0). If you accidentally lose by piling the blocks to the top of the screen you must wait for the time to run out on your game to see your final score. This was to originally to ensure everyone in the tournament ended at the same time.

A button..... Rotates block 90 degrees clockwise.
B button..... Rotates block 90 degrees counter-clockwise.
Left and Right..... Moves block left and right.
Down..... Drops block quickly.

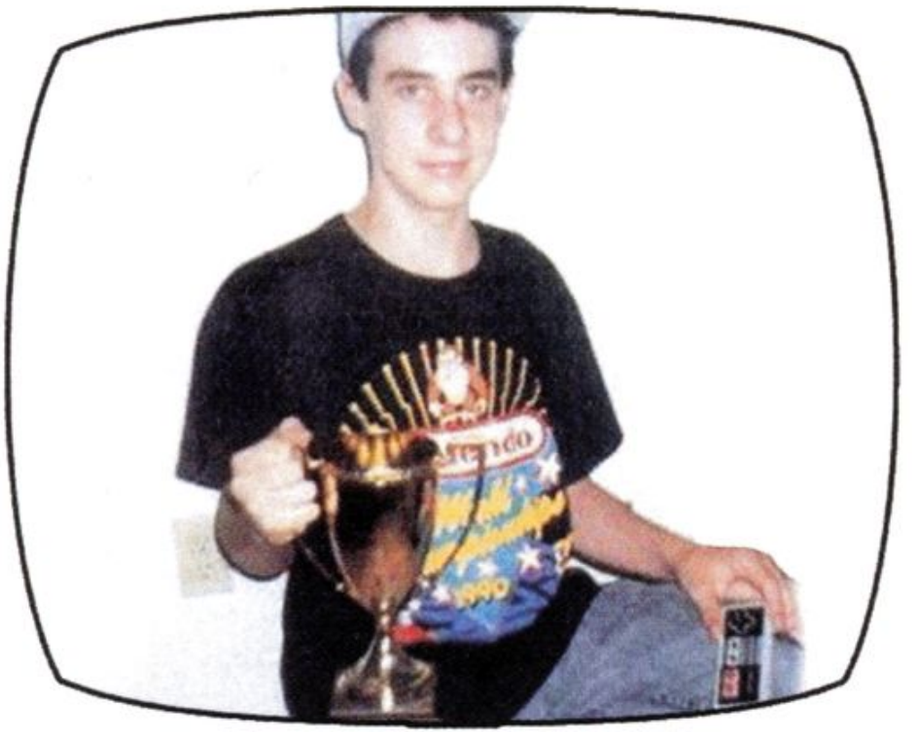
Scoring



When the time runs out, the game ends and your score is displayed. This is calculated by multiplying your Super Mario Bros. score by one, multiplying your Rad Racer score by ten, and multiplying your Tetris score by twenty-five. The three products are then added together for your final score.

When the original 1990 competition began, the only real rule was to reach the highest score possible. When some competitors were found to reach very high scores in Super Mario Bros. alone using techniques Nintendo had not even thought players would use in the competition, and without ever even playing up to the other two games, a new rule was put in place: Competitors must at least play the other two (make it to Tetris) to qualify. This may be a useful rule to enforce when competing among friends with your cartridge!

Thor Ackerlund Memoirs



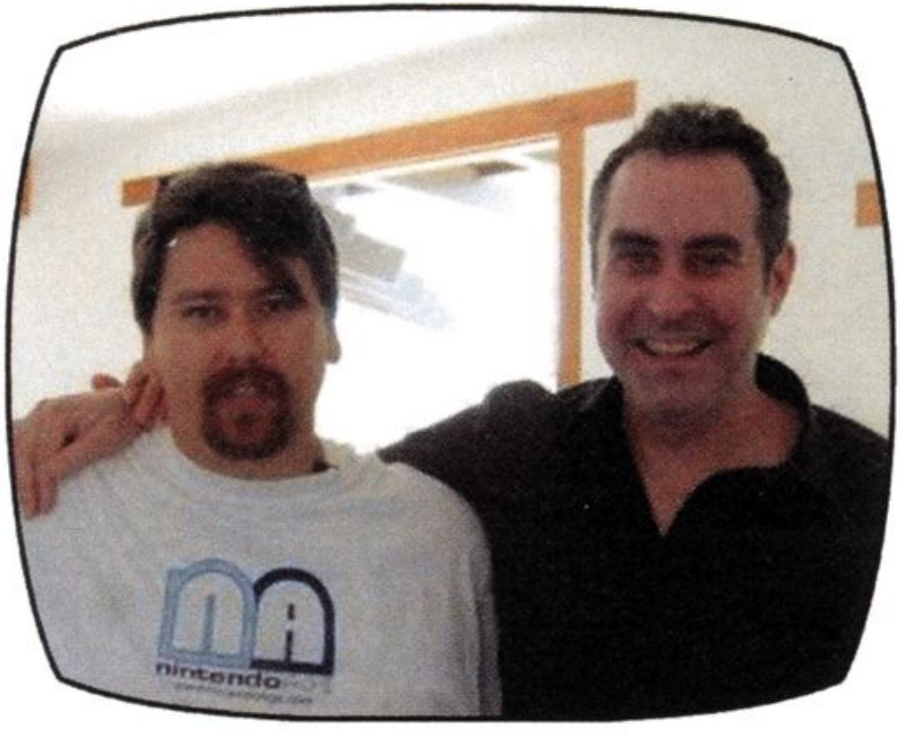
The Nintendo World Championships of 1990 were everything it was said to be, and then some. At the time I was very isolated, and gaming was my one social connection to the world around me. I could go to an arcade or a game store or just talking to people around my own age and it seemed like just about anybody knew and played Nintendo. Things became legendary, like Ninja Gaiden or Battletoads being ludicrously difficult. A new Zelda or Mario or Mega Man game was almost a cultural event.

The year before the NWC, exactly two months after my birthday on March 4th, our home burned down. 4 days later, my mother collapsed, died, and was resuscitated later, causing severe brain trauma and requiring a very long hospital stay. I was halfway through the 6th grade and moved from a town, school, and friends into a very lonely world living out of a hospital room and waiting, a small box of Micro Machines the totality of what I managed to salvage from the ashes and wreckage.

Time passed, and our family found another home. I was too far behind in school to go back to public school without repeating grades, so I was entered into home schooling. A gameboy, and a local friend with an NES really made the days more bearable. The Wizard came out, and it seemed larger than life, gaming on huge screens, brand new games, prizes, just general excitement to a kid of the time. And then we found out about the real NWC, first stop my city of Dallas, and a 9 month behemoth that would end in Universal Studios Hollywood.

I never thought of myself as particularly talented with gaming in general, but the idea was really exciting, that kids like me could compete and win the whole thing, just like a movie.

Thor Aackerlund Memoirs



Seeing the NWC for the first time was completely mind blowing. The convention hall was massive, and it was jammed full of everything Nintendo that they could fit. The announcers were up on the big stage full of energy and enthusiasm, there were rows upon rows of NESes, Gameboys, competition stations, and various special sections, just wall to wall Nintendo. News crews shuffled about, and it was a very high energy atmosphere.

I did decently in Dallas, enough so that several weeks later I was able to get driven a few hours south to the Houston event, and after getting a real NES to practice on, was able to win the 12-17 category for that city. From there it was a whirlwind rest of the year as time moved towards the finals.

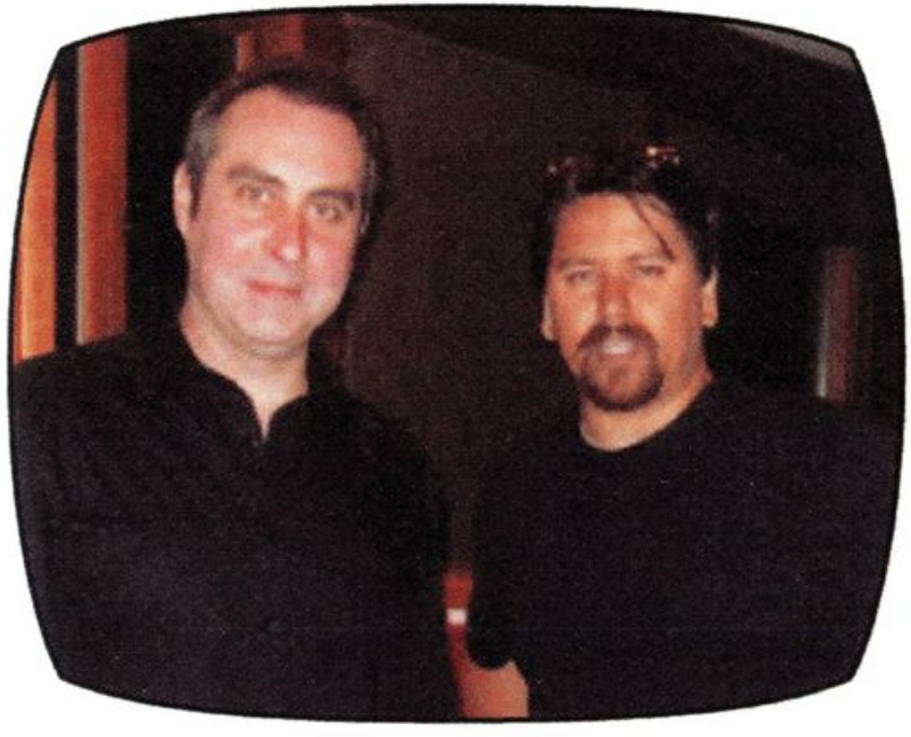
More than anything, I remember the people from the time. I was able to travel to several cities in the region as the tour bounced from place to place, and whether I met someone only at one city or several, there was a certain camaraderie and respect that was shared. We watched new records rise, shared rumors and strategies and tips, and had more fun than any kid should have. Terry Lee Torokr, who was the Emcee of the tour, had boundless energy and immense patience with everybody. Off stage and at a local restaurant gathering on a night after a city event, he was every bit as kind and patient as he was on stage if not more so. It is to his credit that the tour was as great as it was.

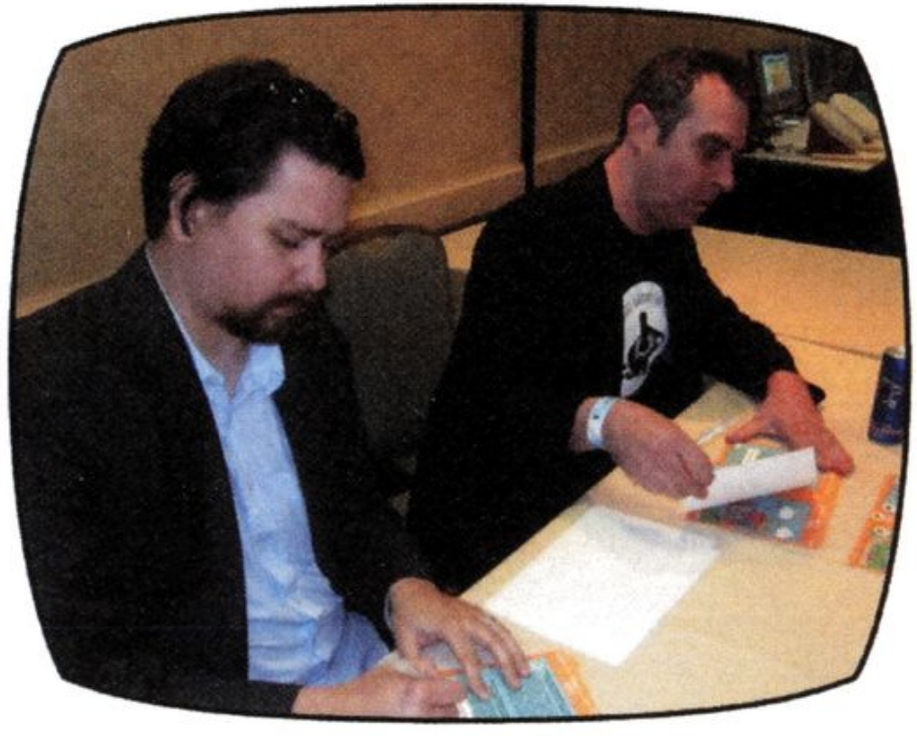
The finals were the penultimate showdown, and the energy changed somewhat due to the finality and mystery surrounding it. Although many of us knew one another in person, it was intimidating to see people that had put up great scores, been posted in Nintendo Power, or been rumored to be incredibly good. It was the distillation of most of a year into a single weekend, filled with absurdity and thrills and an ending to the story. Did I mention that the day before the finals they attempted to

herd us all together on a stage to sing 'We are the champions' by Queen? Because that totally happened, and it went as well as you could expect it would.

As for the ending? I never imagined that a quarter century later, and with two children of my own, that the 1990 tour would remain a cultural landmark in gaming. It will remain a defining moment, a defining era, of my life. I am honored to share my memories and thoughts on it, and feel a kinship to all those who were part of that 8-bit era. Thanks for listening!

Thor Aackerlund





Robin Mihara Memoirs

In the spring of 1990 I was sitting around watching TV when my uncle handed me the Living section of the paper and said, "Page eight." In the middle of a full page advertisement was a picture of Mario and the words, "POWERFEST."

I was 13 and the best video game player I knew. Mastering new games in two days, it no longer made sense for me to buy them. My record was passing the game Rygar two hours after getting it. After a while, I only bought games I couldn't pass quickly, like Dragon Warrior and Nobunga's Ambition. From 1986 (when NES debuted) to 1990 I wondered if I might be the best player in the world. I read the ad and realized this was my chance to find out.

POWERFEST featured three games:

Super Mario Brothers: The player must gather 50 coins as fast as possible, then the game stops and automatically switches to…

Rad Racer: The player must pass the first course, then…

Tetris: The player finishes the remaining time in Tetris, where 97% of the final score is made (the Tetris score was multiplied by 25 when totaled). The only problem was I had never played Tetris, as I wasn't a fan of puzzle games.

Total playtime for each round was six minutes, 21 seconds. The idea behind the odd number was to give two minutes to each game with 21 seconds of graphics between. Players needed 175,000 points to be a quarter-finalist and 200,000 to qualify as a semi-finalist. There were 3 age categories: 11 and under, 12-17, and 18 and up. The top seven played on stage with two big screens and

Robin Mihara Memoirs

Thirteen-year-old Robin Mihara has been practicing for the Nintendo World Championships.

Nintendo wizard

Robin Mihara's flying fingers earn him a trip to nationals

announcers. The top two scores played a final heads-up game to determine the winner for each city, one in each age group.

When the NWC first started on tour, the highest scores were 500,000 or less. By the time it hit my town (Portland), I think the winning scores were just under 1 million.

I practiced Rad Racer and Tetris. My high was around 790,000, and it would take the game of my life to make the top seven. At the competition, 100 six-foot machines surrounded a large stage. I remember all the newcomers saying, "99 guys! Whoooaaa!" when Mario began.

When a player hit 200k or more, they received an envelope with a VIP pass, 2 guest passes and a letter explaining the next round. On the third day of the competition, semi-finalists got one chance (out of a few hundred) to make the top seven in their age category. At the end of the tour, all 90 winners from 29 cities (LA had two winners in each group) and played the same format in Universal Studios Hollywood.

I played a few times and qualified easily, but my scores were not in any way impressive. Sadly, I don't remember the beginning of my game. I do remember my Tetris wall being absolutely perfect (a feat for me at the time), all the way up to the top, where I died without a single Tetris. I was heartbroken. I think I started crying. I couldn't believe after all my progress, I just choked in the end. In all fairness, if there's a wall in Tetris and the long piece doesn't come, a beginner is just screwed.

A couple of weeks later, after thinking about the whole experience and playing my new favorite game—Tetris—daily, I made a crazy decision: I was going to save money all summer and take a bus to California and meet up with the tour.

That summer was all about mowing lawns. I had a thermometer drawn with a goal of $300 to get to Oakland and try this thing again. Meanwhile, Nintendo Power magazine had pictures of Thor, Jason Orlando, Nick Membrez-Weiler and some other champs.

They also had a mail-in contest to win the NWC cartridge (the picture of it was grey, we didn't realize it was gold back then) which I taped on the wall next to my bed. Through all my practicing, I wanted that game cart more than anything in the world. I used to touch the picture and say a little prayer, hoping that I would win that contest. And I'm not even religious. I'm not sure why I wanted the cartridge so much, but I'd think about it all the time.

Three long months later, when all the lawns were mown, my mom and I bought two Green Tortoise bus tickets to Oakland, CA. I had set three goals for myself: Friday I wanted to establish myself as a top player and get the announcers talking about me, which I did right away. I scored 1 million right off the bat, and saw that my hard work paid off. For Saturday, I hoped to break 2 million, something only a few players had done at the time. Sunday was all about winning the trophy.

My scores were good the first two days. 1,300,000-2,000,000-900,000-1,650,000-1,950,000-2,100,000-1,100,000. I thought that unless someone flew in at the last day, this was my trophy to lose.

Sunday finally came and I was in the first group of 100 to play the semis. Three months of prep were coming down to this game. Mario started and, as usual, I flew through before anyone around me.

Rad Racer was a breeze—good players learned to crash at the end on purpose to slow down faster at the finish line. Tetris went great at first, with many Tetrises right away without any holes.

Then the same thing happened: I got my wall up high and NO LONG PIECE. It was like a nightmare. I died with a full minute to go, but maybe I had scored enough to make the top seven. After what seemed like a decade the game stopped and I saw my total: 1,100,000. I came in second.

The last wave of players came and went and I was still in second place, which was a relief to me because in the first place "throne," the screen was a little too close for my liking. We made our way to the stage and once again my life came down to this one game. I flew through the first two games and got to Tetris first. Then I played perfectly. I don't think I had a single gap, Tetrises came like lightning. When the game stopped the announcer yelled," TWO MILLION! We have not seen that before!" That was my score, 2,100,000.

My mom joined me on stage. We had planned on her warning me when there were 30 seconds left, when and if I got that far. The game began. The first to games were a flash. Tetris came and I didn't blow it. I played almost as well as before, and it seemed to be over with a lot of time left. When the announcer came on, I knew I had dominated. I stood and raised my finger—like Larry Bird in that 3 point contest before the ball had even gone in the net—before the score was even totaled. My mom saw the finger and said, "Did you win?" 1,950,000. I think at that time 1.9 was the highest final winning score to date.

I hardly remember the trophy "ceremony," but I do remember being in the back with the suits signing all their clipboards. I got a check for $250, a Game Boy, and a gift certificate for Reebock Pegasus shoes, which I never redeemed.

My mom and I hung out and watched them take it all apart. I was in a dream. What now? She told me that the winner of the adult group had a technique in Mario where he didn't get the mushroom and ran through it small. Very risky, but he was faster than me. Outside in an empty parking lot, a little boy came up and asked me to autograph his hat. My first autograph.

Once I got home, I showed off my trophy at school. I practiced every day and when the Finals came close, my mom proposed an idea. If I was willing to spend the $250 I had won, we could fly to Tampa Bay, FL to practice at the last stop of the tour. One week before the Finals. It took me two seconds to decide. "Let's do it."

The differences between practicing at home and playing at the NWC were significant. The flow of the game was different. Switching games automatically and keeping the pressure on weren't easily reproduced, especially when my NES took two minutes of knocking around to get working.

I had gone from a poor player in Portland to a 2 million player in Oakland. And now I had a secret weapon: the adult winner of Oakland and his winning "small" Mario strategy. I was already the fastest I had seen at "big" Mario, and since Oakland I had taken several seconds off my fastest time. And I was even better at Tetris. I went from a 200 line guy to 240. I wondered if if I was one of the best now. Maybe the best? I thought of the possibilities as the plane landed. It took about an hour after arriving at the Tampa NWC for one incredibly powerful thing to hit me: reality.

Three million had been reached by three players, all in my age category. Thor Aackerlund (who I recognized from Nintendo Power) did it first, someone named Jeff Falco and Kenny Welch. All three players were there. I was so excited. It seemed that Jeff and Thor were on a quest to hit four million. Thor held the record at the time. In addition, my Mario strategy was now obsolete. All of the top players were using a technique where you killed Mario deliberately, twice in 1-1 and got coins much faster (no time wasted walking into the castle, going down the 1-2 pipe, waiting for time to tally, fireworks). All the news was disappointing, but seeing these players I had only heard about was great. I was no longer the big fish. These were the greatest players in the world.

We flew home and I had a week until the finals. My mind couldn't stop wondering what was going to happen. A year ago I was messing around playing games all day, some Spy Hunter at 7-11, Castlevania all night, Super Mario trying to pass it without shrinking. And now, at 13 years old, I found myself in the papers and on the news, with a whole city/state of gamers rooting for me to win.

Robin Mihara Memoirs

Our flight touched down at LAX and Mario was waiting. At the Hilton, Jeff Falco came to the practice room and played a little NES Tetris. Jeff started on level two and proceeded to make this giant C in Tetris pieces. I assumed he was just screwing around. Then, one by one, he filled the entire C by swooping each piece around and into place. It was like watching an artist paint. I had never thought to play this way. Then Jeff told me, "I learned this from watching Thor." Yikes.

That night I found out something that I can honestly say made me forget about everything else: after the finals ended, we would all receive a NWC cart of our own. My prayers were answered. Win or lose, I was going to get one of these things. To this day, the only possession I truly care about is that cart. Everything else is replaceable.

The night before the Finals we were all having dinner together and the NWC cartridge info was announced. The roar of the crowd in that moment still rings in my ears. Families that had been paying $3 a pop to play now got to own one. I wondered how long it would be until they sent it.

The day of the Finals came and I was ready as I had ever been. Even though my high scores didn't compare to the top three I always played better under pressure. I had died in Tetris in Portland, and again in Oakland, but my walls in those games were absolutely perfect. My goal was to make the yop seven, where I thought I belonged, then maybe pull out a miracle in the top two.

The set up was similar: curtains drawn, all the monitors below and waiting. The announcer called us down to our seats, three by three. I took my place and the game began. I flew through Mario and was the first to Rad Racer. I heard the announcers trying to cover all 30 of us in the background. My Tetris game went pretty well and when the time finished I nervously looked up at my 2.2 million. I though mid 2's would make it to the top seven, but wasn't sure about 2.2. I took my seat and waited.

Robin Mihara Memoirs

The curtains opened to show an amazing stage through dry-ice fog. No throne this time, just seven monitors on an industrial looking platform. Thor was called up and Kenny Welch, then "ROBIN MIHARA WITH 2.2 MILLION!" I ran up, my heart pounding like crazy.

We began. I was on my knees, playing the most significant game of my life. In Mario this time I died in the wrong place, and didn't get to Rad Racer first. In fact, all of us finished almost simultaneously. Rad Racer was a breeze, and in Tetris I played a very good game. Near the end, my wall was almost to the ground and I heard the countdown—10 seconds left! I panicked a little, rushing to get a double or two. When time hit, I looked at my score of 2,500,000 and heard Rich Ambler say, "Yes! 2,700,000!" Then I looked at the end. Thor had scored 2.8. That was all she wrote.

They ushered us off to the back stage where I filled out paperwork, my heart still punding. I could hear the Thor v. Rich game in the background, but didn't care. I realized first place had a gold trophy, second had a silver, but there was no trophy for third. As I walked out Thor took the championship by a single Tetris (I believe). I came so close to the big game.

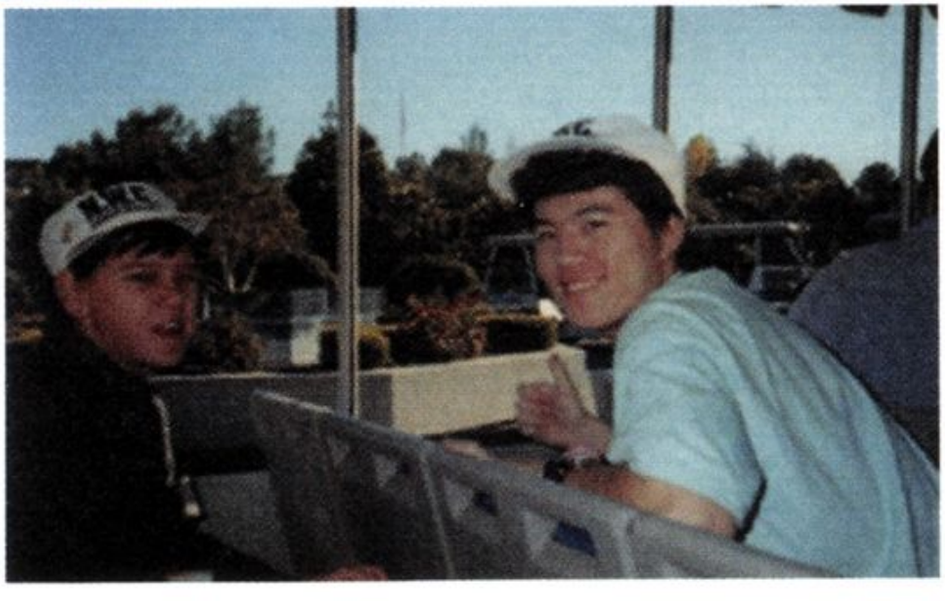
That night Thor had an after-party in his room. I remember watching him say, "Wow, I'm just now realizing that I won!" In that moment I saw that he was just like me. He was a young teen that played video games, not this god I had imagined him to be. He talked about how he had made it to level 30 in Tetris, and it was like "giants throwing down Tetris pieces." We didn't play any video games during that party that I can remember.

To this day, I am grateful Thor won. He not only was the best, but I think worked the hardest to be so. He was humble through it all, and truly a kind person.

Robin Mihara Memoirs

We flew home and I saw the news had been updating the state on my progress. My family started calling me "champ," even though I didn't think I deserved it. I got the NWC cart in the mail a month later and got 3 million the first day I played it (which was about 900 times). A year later I scored 4 million a few times. I always wanted to get the top seven together again and have another go. Maybe it will happen someday.

Robin Mihara



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